

Daily
Nebraskan
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Higher power

McElroy's future lies in judges' hands

The biggest mass murder in Nebraska history was averted on Oct. 12, 1992. It would have been more tragic than Starkweather's rampage across Nebraska. There would have been more deaths than Simants' killings in western Nebraska.

The tragedy, the terror, the nightmare would have happened right here at the University of Nebraska. Shortly after noon on that warm Monday, a higher power stepped in when Arthur McElroy attempted to kill about 20 classmates.

This higher power didn't let the fully locked and loaded Inland .30-caliber M-1 carbine semiautomatic rifle fire. The weapon jammed — and 20 lives were saved.

A judicial higher power finally decided the case on Friday. In District Judge Bernard McGinn's opinion, McElroy was insane on that October day, and is not guilty of attempting murder of those students.

McElroy's road through the judicial system has been long. This case has not attracted a significant amount of media attention or public outcry. It will not be remembered as a celebrated case with a winning prosecution or defense.

This case doesn't have a winner.

Even though McElroy was ruled competent to stand trial, three doctors are convinced he was unsure of what he was doing that day in 1992 when he walked into the Ferguson Hall classroom.

The doctors said McElroy suffered from a type of paranoia and he didn't understand that what he was doing was wrong.

Many of the student-victims in this case now are living across the country. But they certainly remember that day when disaster was averted by a higher power.

During a hearing on May 4, McGinn will begin to decide if McElroy is dangerous to himself or others. Just because the case has not attracted much attention, Judge McGinn and future judges who hear the case cannot forget McElroy's actions on Oct. 12, 1992.

This will be the judge's time to exercise his higher power.

Bum deal

Baseball needs permanent agreement

Let the games begin.

The 1995 major-league baseball season — and it now can truly be called that — is back from the dead.

The 28 team owners did not lock out the players, and so the season will start.

Replacement players find themselves with nothing but shattered dreams and a one-way ticket home.

And what do baseball fans find themselves with? Proof that God exists? A purpose in life? A renewed feeling of hope?

Wrong.

There was no deal.

The rules were set back to the way they were last season, for now. So they'll play the 1995 season and try to reach some common ground in that time.

But both sides already have had plenty of time to do that, and they haven't.

A real agreement needs to be worked out before games start being played.

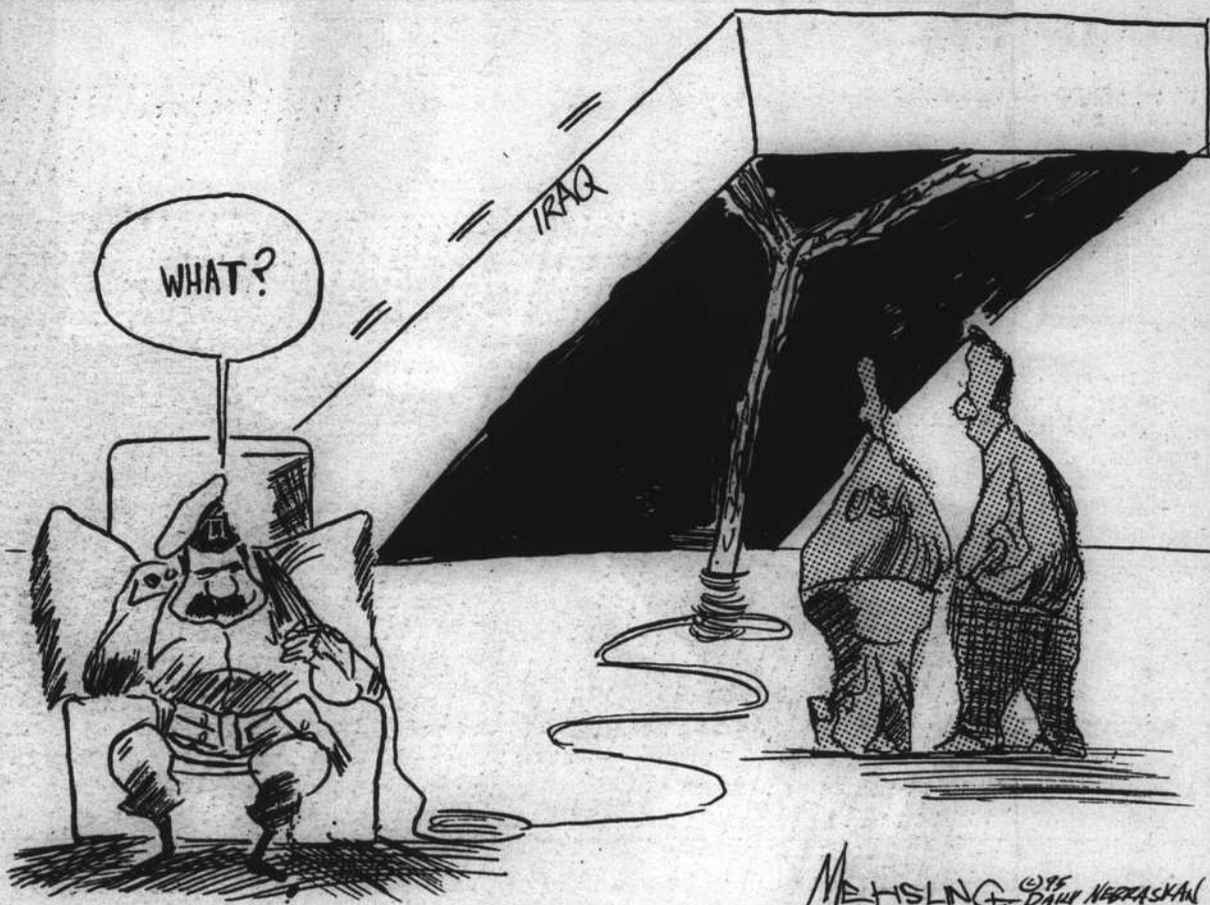
If that doesn't happen, fans will be worked up at the end of the season when they suddenly realize the tease is over.

Editorial policy

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Letter policy

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others. Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit or reject all material submitted. Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. The editor decides whether material should run as a guest opinion. Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Letters should include the author's name, year in school, major and group affiliation, if any. Requests to withhold names will not be granted. Submit material to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.



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P i e a s e
W r i t e
B a c k

The Daily Nebraskan wants to hear from you. If you want to voice your opinion about an article that appears in the newspaper, let us know. Just write a brief letter to the editor and sign it (don't forget your student ID number) and mail it to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R Street, Lincoln, NE 68588-0448, or stop by the office in the basement of the Nebraska Union and visit with us. We're all ears.

Endless love is a magic mix

The other day I was at The Mill and was browsing through a magazine. As my eyes skimmed over the pages of the magazine, one picture caught my attention and stilled my eyes. It was an awesome picture of the Taj Mahal!

The Taj Mahal is one of the most beautiful and elegant structures on Earth, built completely of white marble. Considered to be one of the seven wonders of the world, it was built by Shah Jahan as an expression of his undying love for his wife Mumtaz. It would not be an understatement to say that the Taj Mahal is considered by many to be the ultimate symbol of everlasting love. Coming from the land of the Taj Mahal, I have always been fascinated by the concept of everlasting love.

Everlasting love. The emotional equivalent of the spiritual nirvana. For some this is the embodiment and the purpose of life, and for some others it is the elusive, ever-out-of-reach enigma that is not quite real.

As humans, we have always been obsessed with the topic of romance. The worldwide fame and fascination with the age-old stories of Romeo and Juliet, Layla and Majnu, etc., are standing testimonies of our preoccupation with this powerful phenomenon. But then romance does not equal everlasting love.

These are tragic stories where the lovers die for their love (or is it because of their love?) and we can only guess, were they not denied their lives, whether they would have "lived happily ever after" and reached a ripe old age.

Even though Cinderella, Aladdin and Snow White are supposed to have lived happily ever after, I



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cannot but wonder if Cinderella had snored, would her prince still love her the same? What would the sequels to these stories be like? What if you kiss your prince and he turns back into a frog? How many of our romances have the commitment and tenacity to last the tests and trials of time?

As my thoughts ran in this direction, I was puzzled at what makes a great romance an everlasting love. Is it the commitment of characters like Andy Garcia's in "When a Man Loves a Woman?" Or is it the tenacity of Meg Ryan's character?

As I was pondering over this issue, my take-home exam lay neglected beneath piles of news magazines and newspapers (first things first) and a headline caught my attention. "Man stabs wife to death" — it was enough to bring my romantic exploration to a screeching halt.

This headline would probably not shake people up, as they live in the O.J. era of domestic violence, as people become inured to it and eventually apathetic. But what would catch your attention was the husband — the killer — got 5 years probation as his sentence. Atrocious. And I read on.

The story turned out to be quite different. This was neither about domestic violence nor about a

husband's overbearing jealousy. What was different about this story was that the husband stated that he loved his wife and the wife was suffering from a terminal illness.

No, this is not about euthanasia, either. To me the story is about love. It was a special and awe-inspiring story of a 94-year-old man who killed his wife of 64 years and then attempted to kill himself because she was suffering from a terminal illness. To add to their misery, this inseparable pair were forced to live in different nursing homes because of their health conditions.

Since they had resolved to be together 'til death did them part, they could not bear to be apart. And so they decided to take their own lives.

Forget Romeo and Juliet and Cinderella; to me this is a story of everlasting love. These are the unsung heroes of everlasting love, and they are probably our neighbors, grandparents or friends. These are the people who live out a great romance and turn it into an everlasting love.

In its own way, the story had answered my question of what makes a romance an everlasting love. It is the combination of romance with commitment, tenacity, patience and love that makes the magic potion. It all suddenly dawned on me.

I wonder if the seat that I was sitting on was made of the bodhi tree, under which Buddha attained enlightenment. I also wonder if all this newfound enlightenment would help me with my take-home test. Maybe not.

Ramalingam is a graduate student in computer science and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.